

BOOK REVIEW

Fungi and Environmental Change: Symposium of the British Mycological Society, held at Cranfield University, March 1994, edited by J. C. Frankland, N. Magan, and G. M. Gadd. 1996. xvi + 351 pp. illus. ISBN 0-521-49586-5 \$95.00 (cloth). Cambridge University Press, New York.

Rarely does one find a collection of articles being devoted completely to the interactions of the fungi and the environment. Assembled herein are 19 papers drawing on the combined knowledge of 40 scientists. Although the coverage is primarily European in scope, the universal nature of the fungi is documented well.

The most intriguing aspect of the volume lies in the breadth of the materials covered. One might ask, "What is a mycologist?" after reading this book. The vademecum of the mycologist is comprised of many tools—combining the talents of the biologist, chemist, ecologist, pathologist, physicist, etc.—in the quest for a greater understanding of the fungi. The text exemplifies these qualities as the environment is explored from the vantages of the fungi. The reader will find pertinent information on the fungi and biotic interactions. Some of these interactions include forest tree and agricultural plant diseases, activities of the fungi on the surfaces of living leaves and in the litter of leaves, and as components of the soil mycobiota in the form of mycorrhizal and non-mycorrhizal partners. The abiotic interactions are represented through investigations on the roles of ultraviolet light, acid rain components, and several atmospheric pollutants on growth of lichenized and non-lichenized fungi. Readers may be excited with a query into the application of the chaos theory to environmental mycology in the concluding chapter.

The editors are to be congratulated on the publication of the book and thereby bringing these noteworthy articles to the attention of the scientific community. The convenience of the genus/species index adds to the utility of the general index. While some may find the book expensive, certainly the volume should be recommended as an acquisition to the library.

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